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the various natural resources of the bush would probably enable the native to tide over a period in which the taro gardens failed completely.

Such clothing as he wears is made by beating out the bark of a *ficus* tree; his belt is plaited with thin strips of cane; his pipe is a tube of bamboo; his cheeks are streaked with a red paint obtained from a seed; his ready-made luggage-strap or the mooring cable for his canoe is a creeper withe or a length of rattan cane. These are only a few of the uses to which the Orokaiva, true forest-dweller that he is, may put the multifarious products of his environment. One cannot fail to be impressed by his wonderful familiarity with the forest—so perplexing to one who is not a woodsman—and with his extempore skill and resource in turning all its products to account.

Wide areas of the plain—though still but a small proportion of its total extent—are covered with *alang alang*, or long grass. The apparent spread of these grass patches, and the corresponding deforestation have caused the Government some anxiety. As yet, however, this aspect of the matter has made no appeal to the native. The grass patch, entirely unproductive as it is, and almost invincible to cultivation, yet provides an annual supply of game when it is burnt off by the hunting party. It seems, indeed, as if the grass were regarded in the light of a special asset to its owners.

Fauna

Of the wild animals which these burnings drive into the nets of the hunters most important is *sus papuensis*, that fierce long-legged animal which abounds throughout Papua. But there is an unclassified multitude of marsupials ranging downwards in size from the wallaby, all of which are welcome to the Orokaiva, who despises no meat that comes his way. Of the tree-climbing marsupials the most notable is the cuscus, with beautifully dappled fur of white, yellow, and brown, which is cut into strips and worn in long streamers from the armlet of the warrior; and in the hills a larger animal, the tree-kangaroo, whose rich brown fur is used for the same purpose. Most beautiful of all is the

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In fine it may be argued that the seclusion, together with the purificatory rites at the end of it, aim (the one in a positive manner, the other in a negative or precautionary manner) at the physical perfection of the initiate.

I have never met with any native rationale for the *suna* ceremonial observance; but a very similar process is sometimes used in the treatment of sickness; and as the argument is in this case fairly clear it may throw some light upon the rite in general. A man who has for some time been suffering from headache and general pains submits himself to treatment called *jura*.[1] Various leaves (*Tebo*, *Hamanya*, *Bakimo*, *Haiva*, *Hamburi*, *Kore*, *Urga*, are the names of some of them—but there are many recipes for *jura*) are scraped and pounded in a wooden dish with coco-nut oil. The patient squats over it covering himself with a pandanus mat, a hot stone is slipped into the dish, and he sits in a cloud of steam. The only remarkable feature about the leaves used is that they all possess a more or less strong smell (*mumu*), that of the *tebo* being in European nostrils nothing short of abominable.

Now it is a very common Orokaiva theory that sickness may be due to the immanence of the spirits of the dead in the patient, and I have been assured on more than one occasion that they may be driven out by noisome medicines, simply, it is said, because they cannot endure the smell. The object of the *jura* fumigation, therefore, seems to be to drive out the malignant spirits; and (although I have not noted whether it possessed any strong smell) the ceremonial *suna* may possibly be used with the same idea. The novices during their true initiation in the *embabi* ceremony, and during their subsequent seclusion and association with the flutes and bull-roarer, have been in intimate association with the spirits of the dead—*sovai*, *embabi*, or *siango*. The fact that there is a vast deal of sham in the whole cycle of ceremonies does not altogether preclude a belief that the *embabi* are really present. As we have observed, make-believe and true

[1] See p. 297. The word is sometimes given to the ceremonial rite which I have called *suna* throughout, but I have not heard the word *suna* given to the 'medical' process.

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775 825 engaged in pitched battle with a large number of *sovai*; but whenever they brought down one of their opponents it would turn into a wallaby or a bird and make off.

One may mention at this point several variant forms of the *sovai*. The fire-fly (*uvi*) is very commonly regarded as a *sovai* form; sometimes more fancifully it is said that the fire-flies are the eyeballs of the dead. Again, the phosphorescent fungi *himbaja* may be *sovai*, though, of course, they are not always so, and little boys will play with them quite fearlessly, fixing them as luminous disks to their foreheads at night time. Again, the *sovai* may take the form of the *siriho*, i.e. the nest of the termite in a tree, which for some reason always has an uncanny suggestion to an Orokaiva. Again the meteor *hara* has been referred to in my hearing as a *sovai*, though I do not believe this to be an important or a general belief.

[824] [821]

775 One variant, or rather specific, form of the *sovai* is, however, of great interest. When a man has been slain in fight he becomes a *diroga*, and although the actual form or forms of the *diroga* have never been accurately defined in my hearing, they all have this much in common that they are *i-sovai* —'upper' or 'on top' *sovai*—i.e. they do not belong to the earth or the stream, but flit about in the upper air, where they are sometimes heard to whistle as they pass. This singular, but apparently very general, belief has formed the groundwork of one of the variants of the Taro Cult, and a fuller description of the subject may be seen in the report on that movement.[1]

We may now pass to the third general form in which the *sovai* may appear, viz. that of a fiend or hobgoblin, or of any monstrous creature that inhabits the bush and is liable to attack the lonely wanderer. Various imaginative descriptions are given of the *sovai* in this character. They may have hairy bodies and long fangs; several have pictured them with eyes in the back of their heads; one informant who saw a *sovai* in his boyhood recalled with horror the unnatural skinniness of its arms and legs. It is in this form that the spirits of the dead are represented to the initiates among the

[1] 'The Taro Cult' in *Orokaiva Magic*, pp. 68–72.

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	European Name.	*Native Name.*	*Remarks.*
Tuberous	Manioc*	*Manioka*	Very rare among Orokaiva.
	Sweet potato	*Gevoia*	
	Taro	*Ba*	
	Yam	*Kai*	
Graminaceous	*Ipa*	*Ina*	An *Andropogon*
	Maize *	*'Koni', Komona Kuku-ta-pije*	
	Sugar-cane	*Jou (Dou)*	
Cucurbitaceous	Cucumber	?	Indigenous
	Gourd	*Sigi (Tigi)*	
	Pumpkin*	*Pumpkin, Batana*	
	Water-melon*	—	
Miscellaneous fruits, &c.	Bananas and plantains	*Pije (Bido)*	
	Pineapples*	—	
	Tomatoes*	—	Rare
Narcotics, &c.	Betel pepper	*Hingi (Kingi)*	*Piper betle*
	Tobacco	*Orokaiva, Kaiva Kuku, Soka, &c.*	
Cultivated trees and palms	Areca	*Sa (Da)*	Betel-nut palm
	Coco-nut	*Bu (Mutari)*	
	Lime*	*Siporo*	
	Mandarin*	—	Rare
	Mango*	*Ewa*	Rare
	Orange*	—	Rare
	Papaw*	*'Popo', Bitani*	
Valued trees, palms, &c.	Bark-cloth tree	*Ajimo*	Sometimes planted
	Bread-fruit	*Oga* and *Eumba*	Sometimes planted
	Fig	*Junga*	
	Hombari	*Hombari*	?
	Mango (wild)	*Ewa*	
	Pandanus	*Monga*	Used for fibre
	Pandanus (fruiting)	*Onja*	
	Puga	*Puga*	*Cycas media*
	Okari	*Tauga*	*Terminalia Okari*

* The plants marked with an asterisk are of European introduction.

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represents the more usual Orokaiva fashion) it is as if we should pour a dose of cough medicine into a man's hat in the hopes of curing him. In the former and less usual case it is as if we should pour it down his throat, or with equal assurance down his back.

It is perhaps possible that all the symbols of magical procedure should be comprised in these two categories without stretching them too widely, i.e. they might be classified as Similarity Symbols and Contact Symbols, which correspond with Frazer's laws of Homoeopathic Magic and Contagious Magic. But it must be remembered that any kind of association, sometimes a strangely remote one, may invest an object with a symbolic character. I may give a few final examples to show how faint the association may be.

The use of tree-leaves is very characteristic of Orokaiva magic. They very often play the part of the specific, i.e. the medicine proper, the really potent but still inscrutable factor; but very often too their symbolic properties can be explained. A witness drew my attention to the damp, cold feel of a certain leaf used in the making of wet weather. Another leaf was used by a magician who had power to calm the seas. He would cry out to the waves to die down and cast into the water a leaf of the *Ombi* tree. The efficacy of that particular leaf lay in the fact that it wilted within a few moments of being plucked. There were two cold-weather medicines (not, I believe, widely known). One was called *Ino-etu*, or 'Dog-tail', and the virtue of *Ino-etu* was merely in its name. For is not the dog, with its shivering and crouching by the fire, peculiarly sensible of the cold? The other was the delicate leaf *Kigira* which partly closes toward sunset as if it were shrinking or huddling itself up from the cold of evening. *Kigira*, by the way, was used elsewhere for quite another purpose. The same trait, viz. of closing at dusk, travelling in another associative channel, made the plant a useful soporific for babies, because it appeared to sleep as babies should sleep. The plant picturesquely

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named *Sovai-gapu*, or 'Ghost-wings', was recommended by the same property for the same purpose.

Perhaps the best example is provided by the ill-defined Orokaiva custom which resembles the *couvade*. Very often a husband, after the birth of his child, will avoid working in the garden. The reason is perhaps his fear of a misadventure which might in some vicarious manner affect the child; and two independent informants have given me the same curious explanation. In clearing the gardener would lay hold of the tender sapling and, as he raised his sharp axe to strike a severing blow, there would flash through his mind a horrifying simile—the neck of his new-born child. No wonder a solicitous father should stay at home!

So much for the symbols in magical procedure. They have been classified, after the laws laid down by Frazer, into Similarity Symbols and Contact Symbols. A much more detailed classification would be possible but perhaps unnecessary. The essential fact is that any association, even the remotest, may be sufficient to turn an object into a symbol, to make it personify or represent some person or object or, generally speaking, some factor in the result at which the magic-maker aims.

4. *The Logic of Magic*

It has been assumed throughout the foregoing pages that magic is in the beginning a matter of impulse. But it is a fact beyond dispute that the native practitioner does to some extent at any rate believe in his magic. It may not be correct to say that there is a universal primitive belief that 'like produces like', or that 'things which have once been in contact with each other continue to act on each other at a distance after the physical contact has been severed'. However, it is at least true that the magic-maker commonly feels that his procedure, an anticipatory representation of the result he aims at, does in some way conduce toward the realization of that result.

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Ihipa took care to provide himself with a number of bulbs, intending to plant them in his own distant country. Presuming the plant flourishes it will be used by Ihipa according to his instructions. He will impart the secret to his nearest friends. The leaves will retain their supposed power, but it will be readily imagined that the explanation will in time be forgotten. The hairy coat of the leaf will not suggest the hairy coat of the dog unless there is always some one to point out the resemblance. And the association with the man-hunter Totoima will probably be lost sight of when once the plant has been removed from the site of Totoima's activities.

It is impossible to be sure of the reason for the use of any particular specific in the first instance; but it is equally impossible to believe that specifics originated in a causeless or haphazard manner. We can only suggest some original association or analogy which may or may not be the true one. However, it seems probable that some such associative link did in the first instance give a pseudological justification for the use of the leaf (or other object). The object was in the first instance really a symbol. In course of time the symbolism was obliterated from memory and the symbol became a specific.

While the hypothesis may cover most instances it does not necessarily cover all. We may discuss the two words *inja* and *saruka*, both of them standing for any kind of evil specific. Of the third familiar word with the same meaning, viz. *kai*, I have never heard any explanation, but it appears that *inja* is the name of a particular kind of bush vine, and *saruka* that of a tree with a highly odoriferous bark. They were both apparently typical specifics and their names have been applied to the general category of evil specifics. If a man were done to death by the use of the actual vine *inja* this fact would be recognizable from the fact that at death he would be speechless. His entrails would be strangled or tied up (*tigari*) within him as if by the strands of creeper, and it appears that he would die in a kind of intestinal cramp. This is probably

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one of those extemporized explanations which, however far from the original truth of the matter, are nevertheless illustrative of native habits of thought. It squares well enough with our hypothesis that the specific is originally a symbol. The creeper—a native's ever-ready twine or rope—is the very thing to tie the victim's entrails in a knot.

Regarding the *saruka* there was no adequate explanation forthcoming, the only point being that the victim would be able to speak as he was about to draw his final breath and would therefore be able to name the sorcerer who had brought him to that unhappy pass. But the fact that the *saruka* has a stinking bark suggests that a substance might be used originally as an evil specific simply by reason of its unpleasant properties, and with none but the very slightest trace of symbolism. There may be some substances regarded as inherently noxious which it is only necessary to bring into contact with the intended victim in order to do him an injury. We have already seen how this can be done (pp. 191–3). It is quite another question whether from our point of view such substances are really harmful, that is to say, whether the native knows and makes use of any real poisons, and this may be deferred until the next section.

Dismissing this minor question we may consider the psychological justification for the use of the specific, i.e. for the agent of inexplicable powers which makes the mere procedure effective. If the procedure be based on hope, if it be in its merely impulsive stage no more than an imaginary fulfilment of a desire, then any assistance will be welcomed. If the assistance be that of an unknown quantity, possessing a fund of power or *mana* of an unknown extent, then it is all the more likely to be made an object of confidence. The confidence is essentially implicit, both in the sense that it is unreasoned and in the sense that it is complete. The magic-maker, who may have small faith in his more or less elaborate procedure, thrusts the responsibility on to the unknown and rests secure in his confidence of the outcome.

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However, it is possible that the magic-maker, particularly the sorcerer, may sometimes succeed in bringing about the result he aims at. This might happen in either of two ways—directly, by the use of really harmful substances, or indirectly, by suggestion. If he use any harmful substance which has a demonstrable effect on the victim, it may fairly be argued that from our point of view he has abandoned the role of sorcerer for that of poisoner; but we may proceed to discuss this aspect even if by strict definition it should be excluded from the subject.

It is often maintained that natives hold the secret of many genuine poisons, and sometimes that the sorcerer is an out-and-out poisoner. The principal drawback to this view is that those who hold it are commonly unable to produce or identify the poisons which the sorcerer is supposed to use. The same is true of those abortifacient and contraceptive drugs which in the opinion of some observers *must* belong to a native pharmacology which is kept strictly secret from the prying European. One would be disposed to place some credence in this latter opinion if only its exponents could bring to light one really efficacious example. With regard to the poisons which are supposed to be used in sorcery one is tempted to be almost equally sceptical.

There is little doubt that the bush could furnish a number of vegetable poisons of a more or less dangerous nature, and no doubt that the native knows how to avoid some kinds of food which are injurious. But if we are to suppose that any of these substances are used in poisoning it will be necessary to assume that they are of a sufficiently deadly character to be effective in small and unnoticeable quantity. One may mention several of the better-known products which are recognized as poisons by the Orokaiva. First and foremost there is the vine *Anisi* (which belongs to the genus *Derris*), known as 'New Guinea Dynamite' because it is used for killing or stunning fish just as real dynamite is sometimes used by those who care little for the law of the land and less for the ethics of angling.

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824 278 the ethics of angling. The roots of this plant (and in less degree the leaves and stem) yield a white sap which has strong poisonous properties, and which in many known [762] cases has been made a means of suicide. The suggestion, however, that this might be added to the food of an enemy has been laughed to scorn whenever I have made it. The intended victim, I have been assured, would immediately notice the taste and smell—slight but distinctive—of the plant, and would refuse to eat the food.[1]

754 278 824 The native evidence as to the vine *Anisi* has been somewhat conflicting. Some have classed it outright as *kai*, i.e. they have included it among those evil specifics which have been dealt with in section 5; others have said it is not *kai* because its fatal or morbific properties are perfectly obvious and above board. I have one instance in which *Anisi* was supposed to be added to the victim's food. In this case the root was crushed up and first en- [841] trusted to a woman during her menses, who was to sit on it. Being contaminated with menstrual blood it was dried and burnt to ashes in a fragment of pottery. The resultant powder was sprinkled like *aso*, i.e. ash salt, over the food of the victim. My note does not record whether the victim died, and I have no explanation of the part which the menstrual blood was to perform. It remains somewhat doubtful whether the *Anisi* was present in the right form or quantity to be fatal. I have another instance in which *Anisi* was used in sorcery, but this time it was not introduced into the victim's stomach but merely into the bamboo 'bottle', where maybe its deadly qualities worked just as well. In fact one might tell when *Anisi* had been used against a man in this way: his dead eyes had a way of bulging out of his head like those of a poisoned fish.

278 824 Another recognized poison is the cycad called *Puga*. The fruit must be allowed to remain in running water for

[1] Derris root, i.e. of *Derris elliptica* Bentham (Leguminosae), is, however, said to 'kill fish in a dilution of 1 to 25,000 of water'. Vide Castellani and Chalmers, *Manual of Tropical Medicine*, p. 188.

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a considerable time until its toxic properties are purged away, when it becomes a favourite food. I have never heard, however, of the young cycad fruit being used as a poison. The same is the case regarding the bark *Tangiri*, in which the presence of what I take to be Prussic acid is discernible by its smell. The only use of *Tangiri* within my knowledge is that of fumigating a man's head of hair. The bark is heated, and when it is emitting a cloud of pungent smoke is clamped upon the infested head of the patient.

Lastly, there is the *Pekamba*. This closely resembles the plant known in the Northern Division as *Punjaru*, remarkable for the gigantic flower which, when it passes maturity, breaks up in horrible and vile-smelling decomposition. It is not this decomposing substance, however, but the root of the related plant *Pekamba* (possibly also of *Punjaru* itself) which acts as a very strong corrosive poison. This again has been used in suicides, and further it provides one of the conventional means of self-castigation in time of great grief. A mourner on his way to a funeral will pluck up a *Pekamba* by the roots, and as he enters the wailing village will put his teeth into it and gnaw it until some less distracted or perhaps less theatrical mourner snatches it away. Should any be swallowed the result, I am assured, would be fatal. One old man of my acquaintance had chewed the *Pekamba* too freely in the forgetfulness of his grief and was in consequence ill and hardly able to eat for a period which he estimated at 'six weeks'.

There are no doubt other poisons of which I have no knowledge. But with those that have been mentioned it is possible that the plea advanced by the natives themselves regarding *Anisi* is equally applicable, i.e. they are not used because in fatal quantity they would be detected by the suspicious nostrils or palate of the victim. In fine, however, when we consider the countless variety of specifics which are supposed to possess deadly properties and which in known cases prove to be utterly

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754 devoid of any real efficacy, and when we consider the
278 devious modes of application (so seldom through the
824 mouth) which in our eyes rob them of any chance of being effective, we may be justified in regarding the imputed use of poisons in native sorcery with the greatest scepticism. One's faith in native medicines, good or evil, is likely to diminish as example after example comes to light in which the efficacy turns upon some more or less fantastic association. My own opinion—which merely awaits some tangible evidence to alter it—is that the use of really effective poisons by Orokaiva sorcerers is negligible.[1]

754 Having dealt with the subject of direct harm in native sorcery we may discuss the more serious possibility of the indirect harm of suggestion. While the ritual, the spells, and the specifics of the sorcerer, such as they are, may be intrinsically harmless, the mere impression on the victim that they are being operated against him may have a genuinely grievous effect. The impression may be almost groundless, and the imputed sorcerer entirely innocent; but it will be greatly strengthened by the possible pretences or actual threats of the sorcerer. Cases in which a man has faded away and actually died under the fear of sorcery are well authenticated in anthropological literature. While one has seen nothing of the kind among the Orokaiva, one is ready to give these accounts due credence. However, it would be possible to set too much store by this phenomenon, which has been called *thanatomania*. It must be extremely uncommon for a healthy man to fade away and die under the mere suggestion of sorcery. The usual way of the matter, I believe, is this. A man falls ill from some natural cause. He casts about him for the reason of his sickness, and straightway thinks of evil magic; his thoughts fly to some enemy; his friends endorse his

[1] R. Lister Turner (in *Man*, August 1924, No. 88) mentions several poisons which, he suggests, may be used in the kind of sorcery called *Vada* in the Central Division of Papua. The above-mentioned *Pekambe* is perhaps identical with Matoa of the Central Division, which he suggests is Dracunculus.

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one of the friends of the deceased. While the brand continues to burn, this man lightly jerks the string, uttering the names meanwhile of all those likely sorcerers who may have been guilty in the case under investigation. Suddenly the brand falls and is extinguished, and the name which was mentioned at the crucial moment is that of the culprit. It is not difficult to suppose that a little extra vigour in the pull, conscious or unconscious, might lead to the victimization of an innocent man who for some reason was in the bad books of the diviners. When, as is sometimes supposed, the brand takes flight through the bush in the hand of the ghost and is traced to the house of the guilty man, it is equally possible for the same sort of abuse to enter into the experiment. Nothing is commoner than a dead brand or a few lumps of charcoal on a man's verandah, and this kind of divination might find almost any one guilty. Indeed, there is a possibility of foul play on the part of the diviners. As Mr. Beaver observed, 'Unfortunately for the psychic value of the proceedings, I understand the imprint of a human hand may often be discovered on the charred wood'.[1]

An incident in my own experience illustrates another well-known method and will serve to show how much of suspicion, preconception, or even spite there may be in what appears a sincere attempt at divination. Among the Orokaiva's somewhat vague and ill-assorted ideas of the life after death there is this, that shortly after a man's decease his ghost may take the form of the bird *kombu*. The *kombu* is a bird of black plumage, seldom seen, and has for some reason acquired a character of uncanniness. Its usual cry is one of four syllables and is said to be *Kau, kau, kombu!* but evidently the bird has a way of varying its call, and one may expect by paying careful attention to hear it pronounce the name of the sorcerer who brought its human existence to an end. A number of different examples would argue a greater power of vocal expression than any untaught bird could well

[1] *Loc. cit.*

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possess, and they are hardly to be explained on any hypothesis save that a man often hears just what he expects to hear. In the instance of which I am speaking the friends of the deceased, one Handau, had on several recent occasions heard the early morning cry of the *kombu* on the outskirts of the village. It had said unmistakably *Ohusa !* and *Samberota !* sometimes the one, sometimes the other. Two of the mourning relatives approached me in the clandestine manner which the weirdness and gravity of the matter seemed to warrant, and suggested that I rise before daybreak on the next morning, when it would be possible, by hearing the *kombu* itself, to verify what they said.

At dawn of the following day the awakening birds were uttering their various calls when I took a seat in the centre of the village together with the two informants, who were listening in a state of highly strung expectancy for the ghostly bird to repeat its message. We had hardly composed ourselves for the event when the solitary rooster of a neighbour, not ten yards away, fairly split the welkin with a cry as nearly resembling *Samberota !* as any bird short of a parrot could have uttered. Yet this loud crowing of the cock did not seem to attract the attention of my companions, or if it did was looked on only as an annoying interruption. Their attention was focused on the voice of the *kombu*, discernible among the increasing babel of notes at perhaps one hundred yards' distance. It was uttering a cry of four syllables the last of which seemed occasionally to be cut off, so that I felt bound to say they framed the words *Samberota* and *Ohusa* as well as any other.

Encouraged by this verification my informants explained that Handau, some time before his death, had visited a somewhat distant part and lived for a day or two in the house of Ohusa. The purpose of his visit to the place had been to set up a pig-trap of the kind called *samberota*. It was true, they admitted, that this kind of pig-trap was usually known as *bagi*. But Bagi happened